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FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION.

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THE UNIVERSAL AND THE SPECIAL IN CHRISTIANITY.

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(*Extracts from a Sermon in "Unitarian Affirmations"*)

All religions have something in common,—all have something divine. The time has gone by when Christianity, in the view of its confessors, could claim a monopoly of saving truth. Recent study of the ethnic religions has abated the contemptuous aversion with which Christian orthodoxy was wont to regard them, waiving them aside as damnable impostures or execrable superstitions, and their receivers as without the pale of salvation. This was the view with which Christian missionaries in former time engaged in the noble enterprise of rescuing those lost peoples from their imminent doom by drawing them into the Christian fold. They knew nothing or next to nothing of the religions they wished to supplant; but simply assumed that, not being Christian, they must be utterly and only bad, and that all who held them, unless converted and baptized, must perish everlastingly. One cannot but respect the temper of the Norseman who was willing to be baptized, but when the missionary represented the alternative as everlasting damnation, and, in answer to his questioning, assured him that all his ancestors, not having heard of the gospel, were in that predicament, withdrew his foot from the water, preferring rather to be damned with his fathers than saved without them. If the missionary had but known it, there was more of Christianity and more of salvation in that reply than in all the dogmas of his creed and all the sacraments of his Church. Of course, the missionary must believe in the superiority of his own religion. Without that belief no missionary is qualified, or is likely to undertake its promulgation in heathen lands. But this conviction does not necessarily imply indiscriminate, unqualified condemnation of other religions as wholly and only false and bad. Above all, it is required of the missionary that he respect the faith of the people to whom he ministers, and frankly recognize whatever in it is worthy and true. "Every religion," says Max Muller, "even the most imperfect and degraded, has something that ought to be sacred to us. There is in all religions a secret yearning after the true though unknown God. Whether we see the Papua squatting in dumb meditation before his fetish, or whether we listen to Ferdusi exclaiming, 'The height and depth of the whole world have their centre in thee, O my God; I know not what thou art, but I know that thou art what thou alone canst be,'—we ought to feel that the ground whereon we stand is holy."

All religions have something in them of divine import. However poor, earthly, unspiritual, monstrous even, the materials, the doctrine, and the rite that compose their service, they are kindled from above. The altar may be fed with base superstitions, with cruelty and pain, with self-torture and human sacrifice; but no altar could ever burn until a spark of heavenly fire, a ray from the everlasting God, had descended upon it. The uses may be false and detestable, but the purpose is true and the end is holy. Adoration, Purification, Reconciliation,—these are the purpose and the end, whatever name the religion may bear, whatever methods employ, whatever phase it may assume.

Common to all religions is the belief in *Godhead.* Infinitely various are the creeds which express this fundamental belief, infinitely various the systems which formulate it and in which it subsists,—monotheism in one race, polytheism in another; Trinitarianism in this church, Unitarianism in that; but what lies at the core of these various systems is substantially the same,—belief in superhuman, absolute Power.

There is one apparent exception to this universality, and that in the case of the religion which numbers at present the largest following,—a following in all its branches of more than four hundred millions of believers,—the religion of Buddhism. But even here the exception is only partial: it relates to some of the attributes of Deity, not to the essential fact. The Buddhist has no God in the sense of an aboriginal, supermundane Power, creator, and ruler of the universe: he believes that the universe is a power in itself, self-existent, eternal. But the Buddhist adores the founder of his faith, the king's son who renounced his inheritance, who

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made himself poor, of no account, and by faith and patience overcame the world and attained to perfection of holiness. The Buddhist makes a God of him, and worships in him the superhuman ideal, the infinite greatness and worth.

In one or another form, with different names, with endless modifications, every religion holds the fundamental article of Godhead. Every religion offers something superhuman to believe in, to restrain, to aspire after, to adore. If it be but a shapeless block, that block represents the supernal and divine to the cowering savage who prostrates himself before it in prayer. In this primary article all religions agree; and let us add, they are all in this alike imperfect. Paul found the Athenians worshipping an unknown god. Is not this the condition of worshipping humanity the world over, even now? Is not all religion a feeling after God, if haply we may find Him who is never far from any one of us, and whose very nearness perhaps conceals him? Who knows God except in those points of osculation in which our limited nature touches his? What sage or saint who has spent his life in devout contemplation, can say, "I know him quite." What religion, the purest and most enlightened, presents him otherwise than in part? Who that is truly and wisely devout will not confess with Fichte: "I veil my face before thee and lay my hand upon my mouth. How thou art in thyself, how thou appearest to thyself, I can never know, so surely as I never can be thou. After thousand times thousand spirit-lives lived through, I shall no more be able to comprehend thee than in this earthly hut. That which I comprehend becomes by my comprehending it finite, and the finite can never by any process of magnifying and exalting become infinite."

Common to all religions and fundamental in all is the notion of *duty*, the feeling of moral obligation, with its correlate, moral accountability. Every religion, savage or civilized, whatever else it might teach or fail to teach, has said to its votaries, "Thou shalt," and "Thou shalt not." They command and forbid. The commandments and prohibitions are not the same in all: they vary indefinitely. The specifications of right and wrong, the applications of the moral law, differ widely in different systems; but the idea of law, the sense of right and wrong, requirement and prohibition, are in all. So rooted in human nature is the feeling of duty, that man instinctively fetches his commandments from a source above himself until he has learned the meaning of right, and has come to feel the absolute authority of what is meant by that term. Until then, he derives the obligation of the law from arbitrary command; that is, he puts power before right, makes power the source and measure of right, and conceives that right is right only because commanded, and not rather commanded because right. Thus religion becomes the moral educator of mankind. By positive precept and external authority, it trains the yet undeveloped moral sense until man learns to find the law and the reason of the law in himself, and by the light of his own perceptions to choose the good and avoid the evil.

Say not that religion is degraded by making it subservient to the moral nature, instead of an independent and the supreme interest in life. There is nothing higher in man than righteousness. That is the top of being; and religion fulfils its best function, though by no means its only function, when it aids our ascent to that supreme height. Nay, more: the truth of its moral ideas is the standard by which every positive religion must be judged. A form of religion, a scheme of doctrine, which affronts or fails to satisfy our sense of right, carries with it its own condemnation.

There is one thing more which all religions have in common,—the promise of a better hereafter, the hope of redemption, release from the burden and the trial, the weary struggle, the pains and discontents of mortal life;—*Heaven*, which different systems figure with very different conditions, according to the habits and culture of their receivers, but which all agree in representing as a state of painlessness and rest. *Heaven*, I say, not *Immortality*. Immortality is an after-thought, a metaphysical abstraction which supervenes, not the primary, the essential element in the universal hope. And in one of the religions already referred to it is doubtful if immortal life, or life at all, in our sense of the term, can be predicated of that hope. Buddhism differs from other religions in divesting the final Rest of those attributes of conscious thought and will without which the Western mind can conceive of no heaven. The Buddhist heaven is a state of actionless, aimless, will-less repose,—Nirvana; concerning which it is a question with the critics whether to regard it as a form of existence at all, or not rather as cessation of individual life. Be that as it may, to the Buddhist, in whose estimation existence as such is an evil, Nirvana is an object of desire, a wished-for goal, a supreme hope. And in that sense Buddhism has also, like the other religions, a heaven in its creed.

God, duty, heaven; worship, obedience, hope,—these are constituents in every religion. And this consent of all faiths in what is most essential bears significant witness of the common mind of which all races and nations, in their several degrees of capacity and culture, partake. Thus, in all religions there is something saving and divine. When the apostle says, "By faith are ye saved," it is not the topics of faith but the faculty of faith that possesses this saving power.

Admire with me this faculty of faith, that heavenly spark which the Everlasting has lodged in the human breast, by which man can overtop himself and overcome the world, can glory in tribulation, walk through fire, condemn himself to life-long torture, and find repose on the rack; can record his thought in scriptures that shall live when the language in which they are written has ceased for a thousand years to be spoken by living men, for which colleges shall be founded and which men of genius shall spend their lives in deciphering,—that faith that can express its convictions in mountains of stone which Nature shall adopt as her own, granting them, as the poet says, "an equal date with Andes and with Ararat."

We have now to inquire what the Christian religion adds to these fundamentals; what special and characteristic features distinguish it from, and exalt it above, the other religions of the world.

It has been the custom of Christian apologists, when contrasting their own with other dispensations, to rest the superiority of the former on the ground of its moral code. Christianity, they have claimed, excels all other religions as a practical rule of life. I very much question the validity of this argument. To substantiate the alleged superiority of the Christian dispensation in this particular, it needs not only be shown that certain precepts of the gospel are peculiar, and surpass the moral import of other codes,—a point, by the way, which those who are best acquainted with the sacred books of other religions will be least inclined to insist on,—but also it must be shown that those precepts have fructified in the life; that Christians in the mass are morally better than the subjects of other faiths. For what does it signify that Jesus as a moralist contemplated a higher standard than Confucius or Gautama or Zoroaster, if the Christian Church has failed to realize that standard in the peoples subject to its sway? If this criterion be applied, it is far from certain that the claim of moral superiority can be established. It is doubtful if Christian nations are better than others, except so far as intellectual progress—*which is not the product of religion, but of race and clime*—has raised the moral standard in lands the most advanced, intellectually and politically, of those that bear the Christian name. Compare the average Christian of the Eastern Church in Syria or Asia Minor with the average Turk or Jew, his neighbor: I doubt if the comparison will much redound to the advantage of the former. It is also to be observed, in this connection, that Jesus did not claim for his moral system anything more than the fulfilment of the Hebrew code.

It is not in its ethics that I find the true distinction of the Christian dispensation, but in its theory, its far-reaching and reconciling vision, its humanitarian scope and intent.

Characteristic of Christianity is its intimate, organic relation to its founder. This seems to be symbolized in its very name. The fact is significant: it shows that the consciousness of Christendom connects the religion indivisibly with its author, as being not merely a teacher of certain truths which can be detached from the teacher, and which, provided they are received, it matters not whence they are derived, but as being, in a sense, himself the religion taught; a principle implanted, a power embodied, in the Christian Church, which constitutes the life of its life, and which no analysis less searching than the supreme chemistry of death can eradicate thence. Christianity, as the Christian world receives it, is the doctrine of Jesus *plus* the personality. That personality is a spiritual force introduced into human society, which lives and works in the world to this day. The same is true in a measure of every great personality. Every great and noble life once lived in the world becomes a part of the world for evermore. To find the distinctive in Christianity, therefore, we have further to inquire what it is that the personality of Jesus represents, as distinguished from other wise and holy men,—teachers, prophets, founders of new faiths. The answer is given in the phrase, "Son of God," an epithet applied to no other teacher in the sense in which it is applied to him and appropriated by him.

Jesus represents *divine Sonship*. I say *represents:* that word implies something behind the representative, an antecedent idea or fact. The representation includes the being, illustrates it by a special example, but does not bound it, does not confine it, does not exhaust it. Divine sonship is not exhausted by Christ. It is no monopoly conferred by birth or purchased by blood. Paul says grandly,

"As many as are led by the spirit of God are sons of God." "Partakers of the divine nature," says the Second Epistle of Peter. *Humanity* is the son of God, Humanity in *esse* or in *posse*. This is the truth which Jesus represents, which he illustrates by a supreme instance.

We have here, then, a distinguishing feature of the Christian dispensation: it reveals a divine sonship, implying as its correlate the fatherhood of God.

And that *fatherhood of God*, in the sense in which the gospel presents it, is also a peculiarity of the Christian faith. Not that the appellative Father, as applied to God, is wanting in other religions, Jewish and Gentile; but in them it signifies, as I understand it, fatherly care, not identity of essence, —not the *homousian* affinity of God with man which Jesus intends when he says, "I and the Father are one," and which he recognizes in his followers,— "As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us." If the text seem to limit this affinity to Christian believers, we are to understand that limitation as strictly subjective,—a limitation of consciousness, not of nature. Christianity affirms an affinity, an essential unity of God and man, —a divinity in man, a humanity in God; a divine humanity unknown in other religions, distinguishing it from Jewish and Mohammedan monotheism on the one hand, and Hellenic polytheism on the other. The God of Judaism is a sharply defined individual, high and lone, between whom and man there was no communication but through the ministry of angels, or mediating voices speaking "to the fathers by the prophets." On the other hand, the Græco-Italic theology (and the same is true of the Indian and Egyptian) presented a multitudinous host of questionable individualities, deifications of nature, or deified men, a confused tissue of genealogies and old wives' fables," in which the central Unity was lost, and whose mythic immoralities ignored the supreme Holiness. Christianity is the reconciliation and corrective of these extremes. It preserves the essential unity of Semitic monotheism without its rigidity and insulation. It preserves the expansiveness and inclusiveness of ethnic polytheism without its dissolutions and corruptions. The God of Christianity is one, but not an individual; undivided and uncircumscribed; unity, but not a unit; not spatially secluded and self-confined like the Hebrew Jehovah, but space-pervading and self-imparting, equally removed from egoistic isolation on one side and indiscriminate monism on the other; not the impersonal God of a levelling pantheism, which knows but one agent as well as one substance, yet not a fixed, reserved, but an ever-proceeding personality.

This leads me to speak of another distinguishing feature of the Christian dispensation. This flowing personality is what is meant by the Holy Spirit. Proper to Christendom is the confession of the *Holy Spirit*. I do not assert that no trace of belief in spirit can be found outside of the Christian world. I cannot forget those memorable words of Seneca: "There is a holy spirit within us, observer of our good and our evil; our guardian who treats us according as he is treated by us." But the spirit intended by Seneca was an individual spirit, a good genius. The affirmation of the Spirit as a fundamental article of theology, as a necessary element in the concept of Godhead, is peculiar to Christianity. No other religion before or since has ever proclaimed that quickening, energizing truth. The writers of the New Testament did not undertake to define it, they delivered no dogma concerning it: they simply affirmed it as one of the aspects and modes of Deity, a member of that divine "Economy" in the faith of which Christian converts were to be baptized. Think of it, dwell on it, ponder the intense significance of that idea!—Spirit not an entity, not a fixed quantum, but a process, a process forever renewed, a flowing personality, Godhead in flux. What other religion has propounded an idea so deep-searching, so far-reaching, so all-embracing? By participation of the Spirit, and in the degree in which man is penetrated, possessed, and renewed by the Spirit, he is one with God, the son with the Father. For only of the spiritual man is the saying true,—only he, in the plenitude of his God-consciousness, will dare to appropriate it,—"I and the Father are one." Not man as member of the animal kingdom,—not man, the head of the anthropoids,—but he whom Paul terms "the second man," "the Lord from heaven;" the man whom no law of nature has fetched from original protoplasm, whom no doctrine of evolution can derive from ancestral *monera*, though billions of years be allowed for the process.

Father, Son, and Spirit,—we have here the characteristic confession of the Christian faith. But is not this the old ecclesiastical tradition which the very name of our communion, the name Unitarian, is understood to repudiate? Why not say "Trinity" at once, and so confess the Unitarian protest to have been a mistake? For sundry sufficient reasons. I am speaking of what is peculiar to Christianity; but Trinity is found in other religions,—notably in the well-known instance of the Indian *trimurti*, a dogma of the Brahman. Then, the word "Trinity" is misleading. It brings into theology a numerical element; it changes the question of Godhead from an ontological to a numerical one; and in spite of all apologies and protests, it points in the direction of tritheism. Beside its irrelevancy and perversion of essential Christianity, I furthermore object to the doctrine of the Trinity its inadequacy. It assumes to be a complete statement of the substance, or, if you will, of the personality of God; but it takes no note of Nature,—the all-present manifestation of God,— and compels the alternative, either to set aside Nature as Godless, or accept her as an independent God.

The Unitarian reform was a needful protest against the confusion and polytheistic leaning of Trinitarian theology. But if Unitarianism were understood to deny the doctrine of Father, Son, and Spirit, or even to waive or ignore it as unessential, then should I repudiate the name, renounce the connection, and desire that my name were expunged from the muster-roll of that communion.

For this is of the very essence of Christianity; and not only so, but indispensable to any right and worthy conception of Deity. Not an abstruse speculation is it, but a vital element of Christian experience.

Other teachings of the gospel have been claimed as peculiar to the Christian dispensation. Some, I think,—and notably the doctrine of grace, as enunciated by Paul,—may be fairly so regarded. But I know of none so distinctive, so constitutive as those which I have named, none of which it is so certain that they have no parallel in other systems. I emphasize, then, this supreme idiom of our religion,—Father, Son, and Spirit. Into this the Christian ages from of old have been baptized; in this name we all, as many of us as have received Christian baptism, have been united to the Church. In this confession the two great divisions of the Christian world, the Eastern and the Western, meet; in this the various Protestant communions are one. The dogma of the Trinity confuses and divides, but this is common, this universal. Christianity, as now presented, is universal religion *plus* the doctrine of Father, Son, and Spirit. That doctrine, while it marks a distinction between the gospel and other systems, is not limitation, but enlargement of the ground which is common to all. It extends the horizon of religious thought, and is therefore an essential of free religion. For free religion does not consist in ecclesiastical indifference, or heterogeneous association of differing creeds, or in bold negations, but in breadth of view.

That was a brave saying of Peter, that "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted of him." Nevertheless, it needs to be added that, in quite a new and peculiar sense, "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

THE GROWTH OF DOCTRINE; OR, THE OLD-NEW CREED.

X.

PRAYER.

SAMUEL LONGFELLOW.

We Liberals are anxious, among other things, to *liberate*, as far as we can, what we deem to be the essential truth out of its imprisonment in the erroneous conceptions or imperfect expression of the popular beliefs. I shall attempt in this paper to do this in respect to the doctrine of *prayer*.

Whenever men have risen to the belief in God, under whatever form, they appear instinctively to feel that they must have access to him, must come into personal relations with him. If they conceive of him as mysterious elemental Power in the Nature around them, they must try to make that Power favorable to them; to ward off its harmful aspects, to win its beneficent favor. If they conceive of him as mainly the Judge of human actions and Sovereign dispenser of human fates, they try to appease his moral anger, to win his moral approval, to avert, by some form of propitiation, his condemning sentence. If they think of him as Father, in the sense of protecting love and watchful care and counsel, they will seek to know his will and to be worthy of his love. If they call him Father in the deeper sense of spiritual kindred and identity of nature, it will seem most natural and inevitable that there should be spiritual communion and inspiration. If they conceive of him as the Omnipresent Life of the universe, they will naturally wish to come into conscious contact with it, to receive more and more of its quickening into their own thought, feeling and will, and to reinforce their own intermittent powers by the inflowing of this steadfast force. If they conceive of him as the Power which works always by unchanging Law, wrought into the natural constitution of things, they will naturally wish to learn the conditions of that law and to bring themselves into conformity with it by fulfilling those conditions. If they conceive him as Spirit, they will desire a conscious union with him by the exercise of their own spiritual faculties; those faculties by which they have vision of and vital connection with the Highest.

A man's conception of God will necessarily determine or color his conception of his relation to God and his mode of access to him. The common notion of prayer is therefore closely connected with the common notion of God. I need not say how *anthropomorphic* that conception is; how closely patterned after human limitations. Matthew Arnold's phrase, "a magnified and non-natural man," well expresses it. He is conceived of as a separate, individual personage, of vaguely infinite proportions, whose will is expressed, not in the action of universal natural law, but in arbitrary volitions, the divine choice of the moment. To say that an event happens by God's *will* means that it occurs by his *intention*. He has a preference as to who shall be Bishop in an English diocese or Deacon in a New England church. He can decide to give the victory in an election or a battle, on one side or the other. He can direct a vote in Congress or a strategy on the field. He apportions prosperity or adversity, and saves or destroys human lives, by his arbitrary will, "after his own good pleasure."

In all this way of conceiving of God and his relation to man, prayer naturally takes the form of *petition*, or the asking him to give, or to do, special things for special persons. In the earliest forms of religion, the savage prays to his fetish, the idolater before his image, for whatever he wants that he cannot easily get himself. He prays for rain and for sunshine; he prays for food in scarcity, for defence against tempests, for healing of his sick child, for the cessation of disease among his cattle, for success in battle and the destruction of his enemy. These things he hopes to get as a direct gift in answer to his prayer, from the mysterious power or personage whom his idol represents; to get it in return for asking; as his boy, for the asking, might get from him food or a bow or javelin. In the most enlightened modern communities, prayers are still offered for rain in drouth, for favorable seasons and abundant harvests, for the restoration of the sick, for a prosperous voyage, for victory in battle, for

the staying of the fever's pestilence. The Archbishop of England prepares a form of prayer to be used to abate the murrain in cattle, or to avert the cholera. For other things devout men pray: that God would "hasten the time" when wars shall cease and oppressions come to an end; that he would convert all the world to Christianity [or, in some quarters, to Mohammedanism or Judaism]; that he would "make" presidents and kings good and wise, and legislators just, and the community virtuous. They pray for themselves, or their children, that he would "make" them holy and faithful and righteous and unselfish, and victorious over temptation.

Now, all this asking, often formal, but often, also, very ardent and earnest, proceeds upon the idea, more or less definitely held, that God is an individual personage, dwelling by himself, overseeing and minutely directing, after an altogether human fashion, all human affairs; that everything which we ask for in faith he will give us directly out of hand, as a human father gives his child money or a toy or a book, for the asking. But when we outgrow this primitive and childish conception of God; when we come to think of him—as Person, if you will, but not as a personage—as Being, rather than *a* being; not so much just, as Justice; not so much true, as Truth; not so much loving, as Love; not so much holy, as Holiness: in short, as the Infinite Spirit, not *a* God, but God, then our approach to him, our expectation from him, our prayer to him, must change its form. When we conceive of him as the Universal Life, the one all-pervading Power, of which Truth, Righteousness, Beauty, Love, are the correlative forms; when we conceive of his Will as not a series of separate intention, the volition of the moment, but as the constant, unbroken, immutable stream of beneficent Energy; when we think of this Will as a power that works always by the unchanging methods of law; then we shall know that he gives nothing out of hand, but that all things are to be obtained *by fulfilling the conditions*, by using the appointed means. We shall then give up the old ways of *asking* for the true ways of *seeking*. The old ways will be seen to be irrational and barren. All of the old phraseology which, through habit and association, we may retain, will be felt to be mythological and figurative. We shall gradually adjust our feelings and our words to our thought, and from very sincerity cast off the phrases that to us are no longer true. We shall put the new wine into new bottles.

When the irrationality of the old conceptions and language is first perceived, there is a tendency in the name of reason to throw off all that they represented as being as untrue as they. "It is irrational to believe in such a God as the churches present, let us boldly say there is no God; the prayers of the churches are irrational, let us renounce all prayer; the religion of the churches is superstitious, let us throw aside all religion, and breathe freely and act naturally," so some are saying.

If, however, we have learned to think that nothing which is natural to man is altogether evil or useless; if we are accustomed to believe that no error long maintains its hold of the human mind which does not contain a germ of truth, we try to find what this all but universal faith in prayer and habit of prayer really means. So that we may hold by the essential truth which the error represents—even if its misrepresents.

Under the common ideas and language of prayer lie these truths:

That there is a Power beyond the human powers; that this power acts according to law—that is, under fixed and universal conditions; that this power is not to be resisted by us; that if we try to resist it or thwart it, we injure ourselves and suffer; that, if we act in accordance with it, it blesses, strengthens and prospers us; that we are closely related to and intimately involved in this power; that it is a factor in all that we have and do; that our wisdom is to know more and more of it, to learn all its conditions, and then to adjust and conform ourselves to them; that this power is not only a physical force involving our physical being, but a spiritual force involving our spiritual being, to which we are intimately related in our minds, consciences and affections; that it is a moral order of the universe, as well as a material order; that we have faculties suited to knowing this power; that, seeking it, we may find it, that working with it we receive its invigoration and share its life, becoming channels of its operation; that, as our truest wisdom is to know it, so our truest life is to obey it, and our truest religion to trust it with entire acceptance, and to act with it in entire faith; that our growth in life, in power, in success, in joy, is in proportion to our likeness to, our reception of, our submission to, our working with, this Power which is more than we, which rules and orders the universe and holds every atom of our bodies and every thought of our minds and every purpose of our wills in its law, while within its bounds we have a certain real, though limited, freedom of choice and action. This Power we call God; that name to which we gladly revert from all other expressions, because it says so little and means so much; means all that we can put into it of truth and goodness and power and beauty and life—and more.

Prayer, in a rational and spiritual sense, is the seeking—and finding—God. It is the longing to reach the strength which is in his steadfast energy; the peace which is in his unbroken order; the love which is in his universal good-will; the truth which is in his infinite thought; the righteousness which is in his holy purpose. It is the bringing, the lifting up, of our mind, heart, conscience and will into contact with him. Then we see how far we are, or how near we are, to that high ideal, to a likeness to which the identity of our nature with his pledges us as a possibility. Then, as from a mountain-top, we see our lives in their truer relations, and better discover what is our true path. We see our sins in their true unworthiness, divested of the glamour of passion; we see our difficulties and troubles and burdens in the light of the greater strength that shall cheerfully meet and overcome them, of the larger purpose that shall make them a blessed dis-

cipline. We see things in their far-reaching relations and not in their short-sighted aspects. The wrongs, the evil and the darkness are beheld in the final order of the supreme Good.

As we come to the rational and spiritual conception of prayer, we, as I said, change *asking* to *seeking*. We first give up asking for outward and material goods as if they could be directly given ; for we know that, if we would have them, we must fulfil the conditions upon which they may be obtained, so far as our own exertions are among those conditions ; and must trust for what is beyond our power to those forces which will not be changed to meet our wishes, but which will bring about the fulfilment of such wishes as are in accordance with them.

Then we give up asking for *spiritual* benefits, for love, and faith, and holiness, *as if they could be directly given ;* for we see that in the spiritual realm, also, law reigns, and conditions must be fulfilled. But one condition of spiritual attainment is spiritual seeking, spiritual earnestness ; inspiration comes from aspiration ; spiritual life and health from the exercise of our spiritual powers. We no longer ask God to come down to us ; but we strive to lift our spirits up ; to open our spiritual eyes to receive that light which is ever about us. As we know that, if we want health of body, we are not to ask for it, but to get it by obeying the laws of health (such as exercise in a pure atmosphere), so, if we want holiness, we must obey its laws by exercising holy feelings and wills, *in the atmosphere of holiness*, which is the holy spirit in good men or God. Thus our prayer resolves itself more and more into *communion* and *meditation*, and then *action ;* and the inward exercise is a preparation for the outward. And, I will say, a needed exercise. Our actions fail in nobleness because they spring from superficial motives or a low ideal. The prayer of communion and meditation is precisely fitted to deepen and elevate our ideal by comparison with—and by companionship with—the Highest and the most Central. It gives us a universal and eternal standard, instead of a local, temporary, individual one. It lifts us to our own highest and best. It helps to purify us from self-seeking, and to strengthen those powers and sentiments in us whose province it is to limit our passions and rightly direct them to good and worthy ends.

"To labor is to pray," is the often quoted maxim ascribed to the monks of old—a source from which we should little expect it. We are urged now not to pray for, but to work for, the good we want. Simply to ask for it, instead of working for it, were indeed futile. We ought to leave off asking God to do the things which he is always doing, or those which, by all claims, it is man's business to do. And if there be any way appointed (in that "nature of things" which, to the religious mind, *is* "God's will) by which a thing is to be got, that way we must try to learn and follow.

But life is not only action ; it is thought and feeling also. We must, then, exercise not only our will, but our thought and our feeling, if we would get the fulness of our life. A life given entirely to action is apt to be hurried and driven, wanting in depth, in elevation, in tranquility. Its moral tone is easily lowered by reference to visible results and immediate effects. What shall keep the aim high and true, what keep the impulse steady and patient? What but withdrawal, from time to time, into that higher realm of thought and feeling, where, in contact with the Highest, the Best, the Immutable and the Eternal, we can revise our estimates, test our procedures, and purify our motives? We need, in this hurried, confused life of activities, to turn from the streets to the solitudes of the soul, where we may look up to the calm heavens and the steadfast stars, and drink of waters that spring from cool and unpolluted depths. This we do in the prayer of meditation and communion with the Spirit. And for such prayer we must carefully secure the hours and faithfully use the opportunity. Our willingness to do so will be a good gauge of the purity of our spiritual life. And, therefore, where we have the least willingness we may have the most need.

I should not have said all—indeed I leave many things unsaid—if I did not add this : that it is not only in what we do for ourselves in prayer that its power lies. I spoke of *companionship*. In its calmly uplifted mood, we become recipients of the Power beyond ourselves. Doubtless, whenever we *act* in the line of the action of that Power, in doing the things that are just, pure, true and loving, we are recipients of the Life that then flows into and through our will. But also when, withdrawn from outward action, we think and feel, that Power of truth and love and peace flows into our active souls. And so prayer is an inlet of God into our spirits.

The essence of prayer is reverent and trustful seeking; the earnest desire, the upward look, and the confiding will. Whether these take form in acts, in words, or in thought and feeling alone, they are true prayer, and bring the answer and blessing of prayer. And the highest reward of *prayers* is that they make the mood of reverence and trust to become more and more the constant attitude of our souls, and, gradually ceasing from times and forms, we unconsciously "pray without ceasing."

NOTES FROM THE FIELD.

J. LL. J.

—Brattleboro, Vt.—Rev. J. B. Green, recently of Montreal, has accepted the call to this place.

—Rockford, Ill. Dr. Kerr takes up his work after a seven weeks' vacation in Kansas and Colorado.

—Beverly, Mass. This town is supposed to have the oldest Sunday School in Worcester county—64 years old.

—Mukwonago, Wis. At the dedication services of the United Unitarian and Universalist Churches, Aug. 26th-28th, discourses were delivered by Revs. B. F. Rogers, M. G. Todd, Olympia Brown, H. M. Simmons and A. C. Barry. Rev. Florence Kollock has been ministering to the society during the summer.

—LaPorte and Valparaiso, Ind. Mr. Crooker has united these two points, about twenty miles distant, into one parish, giving one service at each point every Sunday.

Miss Ella Giles, author of "Maiden Rachel," and other liberal sermons, from the pulpit of the novelist, has recently been appointed Librarian of the Public Library, at Madison, Wis.

—Charlotte, Mich. Rev. J. N. Pardee, after some months' absence in Connecticut, caring for sick parents, is again at his post, and hopes to invest all his time with this young society.

—Rome. The Pope in an encyclical letter deplores the abandonment of philosophical studies among his bishops, exhorts them to find out all truth by whomsoever taught, but especially to diffuse "the golden teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas."

—Columbus, Pa. Rev. P. S. Thatcher, of the Union Church, retires from his post and seeks a locality more hospitable to his body. J. A. Savage will supply the pulpit while he pursues his Theological studies at Meadville.

—Chautauqua Lake, N. Y. D. W. Moorehouse, of the Meadville School, conducted the last of the Liberal religious services at Bermis Point of the 4th Sunday in August. They were sustained through July and August, and many heard for the first time the Liberal Gospel preached.

—Dublin, N. H. "We don't abound in activities here, but we have a good society and a live Sunday School." We would like to pass such inactivity around among our western workers. We We wonder if even among New Hampshire hills, the home of solidity and sobriety, they don't sometimes mistake bluster for action and noise for work.

—Lawrence, Mass. $1,000 has been expended by a prosperous parish in repairing and beautifying their church during the vacation of their pastor, Rev. E. R. Sanborn. Evidence that the voice that in the years gone has been heard with such satisfaction in the Mississippi valley, vibrates as clearly in New England air. There is nothing provincial about talent.

—Arlington, Mass. Rev. Geo. N. Cutter has been making his summer headqnarters here preaching on Contentment, &c. Our correspondent adds, "Think I can add to the subscription of UNITY, which I most cheerfully will do, as I regard it an admirable exponent of the thought and feeling of live men."

—Conferences. The Michigan Unitarian Conference meets at Grand Haven, Sept. 24 and 25; The Illinois Fraternity at Geneva, October 7–9; The Ohio Conference at Springfield, Oct. 21–23; The Iowa Association at Keokuk, Nov. 11–13. Dates for Indiana and Wisconsin not yet fixed. Dr. Thomas, of Chicago, preaches the opening sermon at Geneva, the evening of the 7th of October.

—The Coming Preacher. Hawthorne prophesied that "the coming preacher would be a woman." Miss Mary F. Eastman, so gladly heard in several of our pulpits last year, will be west during the month of October, and would be pleased to preach and lecture as opportunity offers. Mrs. Antoinette B. Blackwell also desires to make a western tour. Send application to editor of these notes, Janesville, Wis.

—Mt. Pleasant, Iowa. The Universalist Church in this place has been occupied twice during the summer by Mr. Blake, of Quincy, and once by Mr. Clute, of Iowa City; Mr. Blake speaking upon "The Sublimity and Desirability of Patience," "The Triple Mystery of Life, Sleep and Death;" Mr. Clute on "The Divine Influx." Mr. Blake also addressed the White Ribbon Club upon "The Wastes of Life."

—Out on the Prairie. The scattered friends of UNITY, and the religion it stands for, of Algona, Humboldt, Dacotah, Lot's Creek and "the region round about," met half-way between the two first-named places on Sunday, August 31, held a meeting in Clark's Grove and were addressed by Prof. Earthman, of Humboldt College, and Rev. Mr. Butler, of Algona, formerly the beloved pastor of the Universalist Church at Monroe, Wis.

—North Andover, Mass. Intimations reach us that Clifford was rewarded for not taking a vacation with exceptionally large audiences caused by the great number of city people who sought the old town for its healthfulness. Is there not hygienic quality in a bracing gospel as well as in a a breezy prospect. The coming "favorite summer resort" will not be complete without its invigorating preacher as well as its refreshing springs. Every Twin-Mountain-House will have its Beecher.

—Science and Religion. Hiram A. Reid, Sec'y of the Iowa Academy of Natural Sciences, has for two months been campaigning it with his wife in an emigrant wagon, in western Minnesota, living out-doors, geologizing and physiologizing, that he may be fit for his winter campaign as a lecturer in the interests of Rational Religion and Helpful Science. Mr. Reid has done much hard work as a pioneer of Liberal Religion in the west, as many of the readers of UNITY in Wisconsin, Nebraska and Iowa will testify.

—Bolton, Mass. Cyrus A. Roys, of the Meadville class of '78, was recently ordained and installed as pastor over the Liberal Church here. One of the impressive features of the occasion was the participation of a former pastor, the venerable T. T. Stone, D.D., in the 78th year of his age. His somewhat enfeebled voice deeply moved the audience, showing not only a heart that had grown sweetly mellow but a scholarship still growing, and intellect fresh and youthful. These occasional examples of minds growing youthful as bodies grow aged verify the saying of Swedenborg "that the oldest angels are the youngest." Vice makes young men old, virtue old men young.

—Geneseo, Ill. The Unitarians here have had a successful concert, after which they ate peaches and cream, oblivious to August heat and the fact that the pastor was house-building. The papers this time were thoughtful enough to give credit where the credit of such things generally belongs—to the faithful organist and chorister. The Liberal Church may thrive without a deacon, but the disinterested man or woman—generally the latter—who sees to the singing, is indispensable.

—Western Unitarian Sunday School Society have just published in connection with the Boston Society a series of twelve Infant Class Cards to go with Mrs. K. G. Wells' Lessons on the "Corner-Stones of Character," published at UNITY office. Each card contains a Biblical and a poetical selection. The selections are made with admirable judgment. Each card is neatly printed with red border and illuminated with a photograph of some artistic gem. In mechanical and literary execution we think them equal to anything yet published. Price 20 cents a package.

—Quincy, Ill. Mr. Blake is out with a model calendar of the Church activities from September 1 to December 31, consisting of two services on Sunday from October 5, Sunday School, two special Sunday afternoon services, harvest and Christmas occasions, six socials, eight meetings of the Ladies' Industrial Society, nine meetings of the Eclectic Club, nine of the Robins Club, and a Sewing School Saturday afternoons. The friends at Quincy evidently intend to "buy up the moments as they go." 'Tis worth your while to send for one of these calendars as a dainty bit of printing.

—Scituate, Mass. A. G. Jennings, of S. Hingham, is doing good service for the ancient society at this place, whose house of worship, "The Old Sloop," was sacrificed last 4th of July to the love of fire-works. He has published an historical discourse of this organization that reaches back to 1631. Its 19 ministers covering nearly 250 years, among which were several Presidents of Harvard College. Mr. Jennings is soliciting funds for the rebuilding after "the ancient model," the building that for a hundred years served as a land-mark to the sailors.

—Unitarian Sunday School Society at Boston, have bound in neat volume with flexible covers their last year's Sunday-School Lessons from September to June, containing forty-four lessons on the Old Testament, reaching from death of Solomon to birth of Jesus. Also in separate pamphlet the thirteen lessons on the Psalms and Proverbs. This latter contains abundant material for many class talks of a practical character. This year's series is upon the teachings of Jesus, chiefly those contained in the Sermon on the Mount and the Parables, issued in monthly parts. $2 per hundred or 25 cents per copy per annum.

—Northboro, Mass. The First Congregational (Unit.) Church of this place celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of their Sunday School on the 21st. This item may suggest to some of the readers of UNITY the unmeasured beneficence that has flowed from that center. The long line of Missionaries that has been sent forth to western farms, to college chairs, and to Liberal pulpits of many kinds from that Sunday School, ought to cheer and quicken into new life the lonely worker in many a pioneer Sunday School throughout the West. Let us begin to get ready for our sixtieth anniversary, to be held—say A. D. 1935.

—Meadville, Pa. The Theological School opens Sept. 21. The many readers of UNITY who have for Mr. and Mrs. Livermore a filial affection, will be pained to learn of Mrs Livermore's critical illness in Boston. Prof. Bixby's course of lectures before the students this winter will be upon "The Religions of the World including the Philosophy of Religious Development." The portion of Prof. Brigham's library that was left at Ann Arbor, has arrived. It is particularly rich in French and German works. Temporary cases have been arranged for it in the library room. But the need of a separate fire-proof building for the theological library is every day more apparent.

—Lawrence, Kansas. This is the way they do it here, as reported in The *Western Liberal*, Waterville, Kansas. This is a Sunday School without a pastor and with a lady Superintendent.

"We have had very pleasant meetings, numbering from fifty to seventy-five persons in attendance. We use the UNITY S. S. papers, which we all pronounce excellent. We sing and learn sentiments, and the last part of the service hour is devoted to the study of some good person, whose life shall be a lesson and an inspiration to us. The children learn extracts from his works, if he happen to be a writer or speaker.

In this way we have studied Abraham Lincoln, Horace Greeley, Wm. Lloyd Garrison, H. W. Longfellow, and now we have Whittier. We always have a beautiful arrangement of flowers which makes the church attractive to the children, and we have vines growing which are a source of pleasure to us all.

In addition to this, we have teachers' meetings and a singing class Saturday evening, and for two years the ladies have kept up a reading circle which has been very delightful."

—Somewhere. "I am displeased to have done no more for UNITY. I myself cannot do without it but there is not much enterprise or diligence in our 'work,' we are quite dead here and lazy." This is spoken not of a Western Mission post. We wonder how many well-to-do Liberal Societies will suspect that this means them. The preacherless and nameless band at Algona send us a club of 18 subscribers for UNITY, a list that sadly shames many well-housed and much-preached societies. Another writes: "I like UNITY; but am a plodding reader with my hopper always full to the obstruction of the machinery." The managers of UNITY have no desire to overflow the hopper. We desire to improve the quality, rather than increase the quantity of our reading. Another: "I want to help UNITY. I have been greatly taken with the temper and management of that little sheet." The way is open, the more help the better UNITY. A respected father in the Liberal Church of America, yet young in all the essential qualities of youth,

vigor, courage and hope, writes: "I am profoundly conscious of the importance of the work UNITY has espoused, and look to the younger men and women to carry on the work."

—Shelbyville, Ill. Mr. Douthit, in his closing lecture on health, uses the following text among others:

Life is not to live, but to be well.—*Martial.*

The first wealth is health.—*Emerson.*

Health is the greatest of all possessions. A hale cobbler is a better man than a sick king.—*Bickerstaff.*

—England. Manchester has just secured its third Unitarian mayor. Of this Liberal Church at Padiham, over which the Rev. C. J. Street, M.A., has recently been settled, it is said "the young people, after working hours, went up and took off their coats night after night, and actually built up that beautiful church, and have made the surroundings as lovely as a garden. Perhaps the hunger and thirst for Liberal religious privileges that is felt in so many of our western towns might be filled by similar zeal.

—Northfield, Mass. Moody, whose home is here, has been the center around which a large number of his co-laborers have gathered. Mr. Pentecost and Mr. Marshal have bought homes there, and Sankey expects soon to purchase. Kimball, the debt-raiser, has been spending the summer there. Their evangelizing zeal showed praiseworthy persistence throughout the heated term. Mr. Moody laid the corner-stone for a new school for girls. Frequent meetings have been held in and around the village. At one of them Mr. Farwell, of Chicago, told a church full of people "that they were but 'animals' or 'things' until they were 'born again in Jesus Christ, then they became men and women.' In their bankrupt condition Jesus offered them a blank check written all out in blood with permission to draw on him for the full amount of their debts. Mr. Marsh, the newly-called pastor of the Unitarian Church, is busy settling himself. If he has a more excellent way of salvation to preach than this, may his zeal and energy in propagating it be not put to shame by the earnest enthusiasm of these men.

—Shelbyville, Ills. Douthit has been resisting the intense summer heat of southern Illinois, on the homœopathic principle of "like cures like." The red-hot sun shamed out of countenance by the white-hot preaching. Four Sunday basket meetings in the country, at Cochrane's Grove, Oak Grove, County Line and Sylvan. The abundant harvests make the farmers happy, hence his audiences were large and sometimes immense. These meetings meant two sermons from Douthit, and then back to town, where he has been delivering a series of five Sunday evening lectures on the laws of health, in which quack doctors, saleratus biscuit, tobacco and other abominations were righteously dealt with. For pastime he has been attending Sunday School conventions at Shelbyville and Windsor, and watching through the press a revised and greatly enlarged edition of his tract, "The Creeds, or Christ," an efficient weapon against sectarianism and bigotry. The strangest thing is yet to be told: he is pledged to take two weeks of absolute vacation soon. The powers of evil must needs be brisk in Egypt during those two weeks, for it will be a rare chance for them.

—Liberal Preachers out of the Pulpit. Oliver Wendell Holmes celebrated his 70th birthday:

"Year by year his milestones placed,
Mark the record Friendship traced,
Prisoned in the walls of time
Life has notched itself in rhyme.

As its seasons slid along,
Every year a notch of song,
From the June of long ago,
When the rose was full in blow,

Till the scarlet sage has come
And the cold chrysanthemum."

C. H. Dubois, for years an active worker in Michigan, has started the *Saturday Evening Spectator*, a family paper, at Minneapolis, Minn. It will be none the less efficient a missionary for freedom, fellowship and character in religion, because it represents no sect or denomination, as neither does it any party in politics. Independent journalism in one of the main stays of the ship that sails for a better day, larger thought and better life. Mrs. Hattie Tyng Griswold, of Columbus, Wis., who has been an earnest preacher of the "Universal Hope" for many a year, her sermons all the more telling because they have shaped themselves in tuneful measures, has been recently singing of "Soul Possessions" in the Christian Register:

My heart has a home in the mountains,
And my spirit knoweth their air.
* * * * * *
But my eyes have never beheld them,
And my eyes they may never know
The shafts of the strong Sierras,
Nor Shasta's summit of snow;
Mount Blanc may still be a stranger,
The Alps they may never be mine,
I may know not Pyrenean passes,
Nor the ways of the blue Apennine.
* * * * * *
But my heart is at home on the mountains,
And I feel the strain and the stress
Of their altitude so lofty
On my being steadily press.
And the gloom of the loftiest passes
Sinks even into my soul,
And the solemn awe of the mountains
Holds me with a stern control.

And still they are mine, the mountains;
I own them and hold them in fee,
And many a friendly message
Have they sent in their time to me.
From Ural and Balkan and Gilead
Come breaths of a life divine,
And though I may never behold them,
My spirit has drunk of their wine.

The London *Eeho*, commenting on the recent opening of Grosvenor Gallery Sunday evenings, though the National Gallery and British Museum are still closed through Sunday by act of Parliament, says: "There is no harm in a man looking at the daubs on his own walls, but to enjoy the works of great masters in the National Gallery would be a luxury of questionable morality. For our part we see no difference between the two acts, except that it must be much more elevating to study a good than a bad picture. Surely the shutting up of national art treasures on Sundays cannot last forever."

PRACTICAL NEEDS OF FREE RELIGION.

The "Proceedings of the Twelfth Annual Meeting of the Free Religious Association" (now published and to be obtained at 231 Washington Street, Boston, for 35 cents,) contains, among many good things, the address of Felix Adler, the new President, on the "Practical Results of True Religion. From it we make the following extracts:

There has come a turning point in the affairs of men, the like of which history has seldom witnessed. Not since the days when Jesus of Nazareth preached in Galilee and Judea has there been so important an epoch in the religious affairs of men as there is to-day. A great conflict is beginning to be waged, the vast cost of which, the tremendous struggles which it will involve, are scarcely appreciated even by the few. And yet, while this is the case, there are some among us who question whether we have at all a cause to defend. There is a painful tendency visible to wash out distinctions, and a certain atmosphere of coolness prevails which threatens to extinguish all moral enthusiasm. Oh! that to-day there might be infused into the ranks of liberalism something of the soldier spirit. Oh! that we might rate at their proper value the convictions which we are called upon to defend. Oh! that we might cease to prate of "peace, peace, where there is no peace," and might know that *to point the issues* is the supreme need of the hour.

The enemy are strong and know the strength of their position. Never has the doctrine of authority on the one hand, and of submission on the other, been preached in such startling phrases. The Pope of Rome in his *Syllabus* declares war against the intellectual culture of the age, and throws down the gauntlet to modern civilization. He declares, among eighty heresies of the time, the right of free inquiry, and the right of free expression, to be damnable errors; and the servants of Rome, the world over, echo the anathema. A few days ago I sat in the new Cathedral of New York and heard the first sermon which was preached in that edifice. I listened with eagerness to the words of the preacher. He stood there in the presence of the Supreme dignitaries of the American Church. It was the first sermon preached in that imposing temple, and every word he spoke acquired a two-fold significance from the surroundings and the occasion. But what was the purport of his words? The most bold, the most daring, the most emphatic assertion of priestly pretensions which it has ever been my lot to hear. "We rejoice," he said, "the clergy and the laity rejoice, in the dedication of this temple. First, because God dwells here; and when I say *dwells*," he said, "I mean *dwells literally*. Here within these walls God lives, as surely, as really, as he lives in Heaven. *There*, in the Eucharist held by the priest's hands, is the present God. And secondly, we rejoice because God will speak here; and if you ask, 'How can God speak to us?' I answer, 'He speaks to you through his authorized servants, the priests. We speak in the name of God. Who obeys us obeys God; who disobeys us shall be accursed, for he disobeys God.'" This was the key-note to his sermon; in words similar to these did he deliver himself; and this in the nineteenth century and in the metropolis of the United States. And yet he did but assert the same principle which has been maintained in all churches that are founded upon the doctrine of "Supernaturalism," only that he expressed it with greater boldness, greater conciseness, and more unflinching consistency than it is expressed elsewhere.

On the other hand, the power of Liberalism, also, is increasing. Have you ever stood by the seashore and seen the waters decline and retreat? To some one unacquainted with the law of the tides it might appear as if this process could go on indefinitely, as if the sea might recede entirely, and at last the ocean's bed become wholly dry. But presently there appears a change. A new motion is felt; slight at first, then growing stronger and stronger, and the tide turns and the surges fling themselves with thundering reverberation upon the shore, and the salt spray, showered far inland, tells us that the sea has returned to fill its borders. There is this same ebbing and flowing, friends, in the affairs of men. The sea of religion has retired, has ebbed. Some have prophesied that the stagnant pools of superstition would soon be all that would remain of it. But here, too, a change in the tide is beginning to be felt. The current comes in more strongly and still more strongly, and soon, it is not presumptuous to predict, we shall perceive with joy that the sea of religion has returned once more to fill its natural borders. The new impulse that has been communicated to the liberal movement is perceptible throughout the land. It is evident, both in the numbers of those who now avow themselves Free Religionists, and also in the development of the theory of Free Religion. At first Liberalism was merely negative. It denied the authority of the churches; denied the authority of the Bible; denied the authority of ecclesiastics; and that was well. Liberalism directed its shafts against what has been called this morning the "immoral tendencies of the churches' dogmas." It showed that the doctrine of "Hell" is not only absurd, but that it is wicked. It showed that many even of those forms and ceremonies and symbols, which have in themselves no hurtful meaning, which exerted at one time even a beneficent influence, must now be removed, simply because the churches should not be charnel-houses for the dead forms and ceremonies of the past, but rather places where the living needs of men may be supplied by the living words and living thoughts of to-day.

But the mere negative attitude of Liberalism is unsatisfactory. We need *construction;* and I am here to address to you to-day a few words upon what I deem to be the practical needs of Free Religion. I shall endeavor to do so plainly, with frank speech, without much attention to rhetorical ornament. I have business to state to you, and I "mean business" in stating it.

And first, let me say that the needs of Free Religion are far too numerous for me to attempt to exhaust them in the time which is allotted to me this afternoon. I must content myself with mentioning a few of the chief ones, and then shall seek to point out that fundamental need which should be supplied as speedily as possible, and upon which all the others will depend for their satisfaction.

In the first place, then, we need *a new education for the young.* Friends, when I think of the prevailing methods of Sunday school teaching my heart fails me. It is sufficiently terrible that the doctrines taught in our churches should be in part immoral. But what will you think of educating the young in these dogmas? What will you think of giving to the little children stones when they cry for bread? What will you say if in this world of ours,—full of temptation as it is,—instead of supplying the young with a strong armor to protect them against the perils of life, we actually send them out with a bare paper creed, forsooth, to protect them, which the first spark of skepticism will kindle and burn away. Even

if the dogma of the fall of man were true, how can we expect a young child to understand it? How can a young, innocent child, that has never sinned, be made to understand the cry of "original sin"? be made to feel the necessity of redemption? Is it not sheer hypocrisy to teach children to repeat the words and the songs and the hymns which some of us who are older in experience and have our own secret sins to bemoan, and our own backslidings to answer for, may understand—may understand at least how men ever came to invent such cruel doctrines—but which, surely, no *child* can grasp? We demand a species of religious education for the child which shall be truthful. Why, if there is any word in which I would compress all the claims of Free Religion, it is *truthfulness* in religion; *sincerity* in religion;—religion shall be not more, not less, than the very science of sincerity. This is its definition, and in this is indicated its mission. Let me, then, briefly mention a few points looking to the religious education of the young. In the first place, we must keep on a line parallel with the child's experience, giving it such moral nurture only as it can assimilate, even as we prepare its food to suit its age. We must give the child more moral and less dogmatic training. I have begun an experiment looking in this direction in our own city of New York. I have endeavored to build up an ethical school for the education of young children. I have learned from those children far more than I can teach them. I have learned from them how quickly, how eagerly, the human heart, the heart even of a child, seizes the sublimest truths of ethics and appropriates them. I have divided the topic of ethics into two great groups of duties,—the duties which man owes to himself, and the duties which man owes to others. Among the first are embraced the duties of physical culture, such as the duty of self-preservation, of cleanliness, of temperance, and the like; the duties of mental culture and moral culture. In discussing the duties of mental culture the illustrations are drawn mainly from the school-life. In expounding the duties of moral culture the appeal is again made to the child's own experience. The duty of veracity is examined in its manifold bearings. The different forms of passion are studied; the four rules of self-restraint are taught; vanity, pride, anger and envy are defined and contrasted, The grand idea of human dignity is set forth, and, being seen to depend on the relation of man to the Infinite, the connection between ethics and religion is here made. In the second group of duties which man owes to others, the duty of philanthropy, of charity and of love receive detailed attention. The method is the Socratic. No text books are used. The final results elaborated in the course of numerous conversations between the pupils and their teacher are transcribed in their note-books by the pupils. A course in the history of religion follows next. To me the religion of the Hebrews stands for the sublimity of the law of duty. The religion of the Christ stands for the idea of sacrifice. The religion of the Buddha, the Oriental Christ, stands for the great principle of sympathy. The religion of Zoroaster presents an image of the conflict between good and evil, in which every child of man is engaged, from early infancy to old age, and in which it is our destiny to be allies of the Powers of Light. I endeavor to use each of the great dogmatic systems of the world in illustration of some one phase of the moral life; and all the materials of instruction, from whatever source they may be drawn, subserve one end, namely, the elevation and refinement of character. Our school is a school for ethical culture. *Ethical Culture*,—the building up of character,—that is to me the highest purpose of all religion.

But I must not enter too deeply into a theme which is interminable. I will refer to a second need of Free Religion,—the need of *a Journal*. We have the beginnings of one that has done brave and noble service, but it is hampered for want of support, for want of earnest effort to make it the success it should be. We need a journal,—a messenger to go from home to home to disseminate our principles, to win for us supporters. The voice of a single man is multiplied unnumbered-fold in influence if the press seizes upon his words and scatters them broadcast over the land.

We need, in the third place, *a scheme of local organization*. I am certain it would be possible to-day to found at least four societies in different parts of the land, resembling my own society in New York, if there were but the men whom we could send as leaders. In the State of Ohio, a prominent clergyman of the Unitarian Church informed me that among three million inhabitants there are fully a million of people in nowise connected with any church. During my stay in California, I asked prominent persons of San Francisco, "How many intelligent people are there in the State of California that heartily indorse the doctrines of the church?" The answer was, "Very few indeed." Now, friends, this condition of things imposes on us serious obligations. It is not for those we fear who have come out from the churches, who have liberated themselves by their own efforts. They continue to live upon the enthusiasm of their liberation. They have accomplished a great deed, which gives tone to their characters for the remainder of their days. But the young men that are now growing up without any enthusiasm to fire them, without any deep moral convictions to strengthen them,—this young generation is in danger. It is for us to labor for these. It is for us to gather them in from the roadside, and to provide new shelter after the old spiritual house has been torn down. But here we come to the fundamental difficulty, the want of leaders. How shall we organize societies if we have not the men who will direct and keep them together? And this is the great problem before us to-day: How shall we have leaders?

To produce the needed "leaders" Mr. Adler pleaded at considerable length for a special "school for the science of religion." He continues:

For the elevation of the teachers of religion, I demand specialism. And what is to be the specialty of the teacher of religion? Religion may be defined to be the pursuit of the moral Ideal. The specialty of the teacher of religion, therefore, is Ethics, the scientific study of Ethics; or, because Ethics is but the fruit and fruition of philosophy, the specialty of the teacher of religion is philosophy; and depend upon it, the deeper his philosophy the greater will be his influence upon the people. But do you ask, "Upon the people? Why, philosophy is for the educated. But what hold can philosophy have upon the *people?*" And have we not here unwittingly exposed the main weakness of our movement,—that, namely, the ideas of Liberalism are too high for the people? Is not here the rock upon which we shall eventually suffer shipwreck? But I for one resent with indignation the assertion that the ideas of Liberalism are too high for the people. The idea of Liberalism is a new morality, and the moral idea, even at its highest, can be seized even by the humblest, Nay, even intellectually speaking, the philosoph-

ical culture of the teacher of religion not only does not stand in his way as a popular teacher, but is the one means to the end of ensuring him success. For what does that mean,—"to be a popular teacher?" To be windy? To relate pleasant anecdotes? To cater to the foolish fancy of the multitude? To amuse, to entertain? Not at all. But to wholly command the applause of the moral sentiment of men and of their reason. To be popular in speech means to be precise in speech,—to be crystal-clear in thought. And such crystal clearness of thought and such precision of speech is not to be attained by the tyro, but is rather the ultimate fruit of the deepest culture. The thought must be carefully mined, the gold must be cleared of its dross and seven times refined before it be sent out stamped, as current coin, to be a true measure of value in the markets of the world. The great praise of the speaker is not that you *applaud* him, friends, but the greatest compliment you can pay a speaker is that you *understand* him. Not that you praise his diction and his manner and his style, but that you forget that he has a diction and manner and style, and accept what he says because it's true; because he causes it to come about that you cannot help accepting it. And so the philosophical training which I ask for the teacher of religion will not stand in his way as a popular teacher, but will, on the contrary, be the unfailing basis of his power.

And secondly, I ask that he shall not only study the theory of Ethics, but shall apply his Ethics to the burning questions of the hour. There are great evils in modern society; you know them. The greatest now seems to be pauperism. Free Religion arose in this country in the midst of the anti-slavery struggle. The moral struggle against slavery gave it its first impulse. Free Religion will stand and grow and increase as it takes up the struggle against pauperism, against the degradation of man by his fellow-man. There is great suffering in the world; oh, what suffering! Last winter in our city of New York I was informed by a prominent citizen, whose word carries great weight with it in the public counsels, that there were at least fifty thousand unemployed people in the city of New York. And he added (a man of wealth, and station, and of respectability), "If I were one of these I know not what power could have restrained the lawless instincts within me from breaking loose and scattering this system of society, for mad revenge if for no other purpose, because it had so wronged and debased me." Now we know very well that the instincts of our people are not lawless. There is not a more law-abiding class of men in the world than are the American laborers. And yet their suffering is intense; and we must not tempt them too greatly. We must seek out the causes of their suffering. We must not content ourselves with doles of charity. We spend in the city of New York four millions of dollars annually upon our charities,—and a great part of it is wasted,—goes to imposters, while the shamefaced poor in their homes are not reached,—is divided up among three hundred societies, and too greatly, too greatly by far, is absorbed in meeting the expenses of offices and secretaries and paying the hire of those employed to distribute it. Now our system of charity is faulty; but if it were not, yet *charity* itself is inadequate. We want *justice* rather than charity.

We need to seek out the great causes of evil. Nothing wild; not revolution,—no, not *re*volution, but the *e*volution of the good is what we aim at. And we must seek to encourage and guide this evolu on. We must seek out the general causes of the want of employment. We must examine into our industrial system. We must look into our laws of property. We must scrutinize our laws of inheritance. There is no law so high in the esteem of the community, so sacredly held by men, that it must not be brought before the bar of criticism that we may try to discover if there be injustice in it, and to announce the result of our investigation with a fearless tongue.

Friends, there are certain questions which it is difficult to touch upon. And yet who shall touch upon them but the teachers of religion? who shall be bold if they are not? who shall declare obnoxious truths, if not they? If only they fear falsehood more than the wrath of man, as they should, if only there be something of the prophet's spirit in them,—yea, prophets more than preachers we need to-day, prophets with something of that noble courage which the ancient Hebrew seer exhibited when he stepped before a king accusing wrong, and the king asked, "Who is the wrong-doer?" And he gave back the answer, "Thou art the man!" So do we need proph ets who will say to the wrong-doers of to-day, "Ye are the very men." So spoke Theodore Parker in his day. And that was the strength of Parker, and that would be ours.

I ask, then, that the gospel of righteousness be preached. But men tell me, "The gospel of righteousness is old; there is nothing new in it; we all know about 'love,' 'virtue' and 'duty,'—stale and profitless themes are these." The sermon of righteousness is old as the hills, but its possible applications are ever startlingly new. If a man had gone down during our civil war into one of the pulpits of the South and had arisen before a congregation of Southern men and had said, "It is written, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,'" the respectable persons of that congregation would have nodded their heads in approval and drowsily said, "Very true. Very true. True, but old." But if that same man had arisen in the same pulpit and had said, "It is written, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,' now, therefore, free your slaves," with what wrath would they have risen against him and denounced his teachings and torn him from his pulpit! And so it is old to say to-day, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," to the gross monopolist who lives upon the people's sweat, yea, upon the people's blood; but it is new to say, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Now, therefore, fulfill the demands of a new justice such as shall make the ears tingle that hear it."

Friends, the work of a reformer is not an easy one. To advocate hasty change is ill-advised. Every change must be slow and gradual. The institutions that exist deserve a certain deference often *because* they exist. But, nevertheless, the ideal must be promulgated fearlessly and clearly, so that, if we cannot change the wrong at once and in a day, we may at least know the wrong to be wrong; so that we may recognize our short-comings; so that we may ever see the high goal before us towards which we are to push indefatigably on. And that religion will be the religion of the future, depend upon it, which shall be the first to voice the noblest, the highest justice of to-day, which shall dare give expression to the moral idea in its purest form.

And, if you will bear with me a few moments longer, there is a third demand which I have to make of the teachers of religion,—and with that I will close. But in order to understand this demand, let us pause a moment, and dwell upon some considerations of importance. It has often been said that the time for religion has gone by altogether; that what

we really want is to open schools for the instruction of the young, to send out scientific lecturers for adults; to open picture galleries and museums, and to have free concerts in public halls and squares; science and art will help us; we need religion no more. I do not fail in my reverence for science. Science leads us to discover the causes of things. Science has lifted us out of a condition resembling that of the savages who haunt the hollows of trees,—the companions of wild beasts,—and made us what we are to-day, lords of nature's forces; so that nature's forces serve us, even as the genii of the Eastern tale do the bidding of him who knows the charm. We have discovered the charm; science has taught it to us. And more than this, science has expanded our vision. It has armed our eye with the power of telescopic sight. It has opened up to us the infinity of the great and the infinity of the little, the world that swarms in a drop of water, the immensities of the interstellar depths. And yet, with all that science has done, our knowledge is a mere fragment. Science can never give us a complete whole. Science can never embrace the totality of causes and effects: our knowledge remains piece-work. The human soul, however, thirsts after and implores for the perfect. Science gives us the imperfect. Science alone cannot satisfy us. Nor do I fail in my love for art. What being who deserves the name of human but must own its sweet influence. The glory of art is its suggestiveness. The beauty-nurtured eye sees pictures in the sunset, in the morning sky, among the hills, by the brook, upon the shore of the sounding sea,—endless, shifting, changeful, wonderful pictures, fairer than painter ever painted, brighter than poet ever sang. The great masterpieces of art are hieroglyphics,—mighty symbols teaching the beholder to reconstruct the image of the Beautiful, as it lived in the artist's soul in the divine hour of genius. The value of art is great. No one can listen to a symphony of Beethoven and harbor an unchaste thought. No one can forget the *Venus victrix* of the Louvre. That sweet face will mingle ever thereafter with all his dreams of what is fair. I remember, out of my own experience, having seen years ago a Christ-face in one of the Italian cities which I can never forget; so wistful was the eye, so eloquent of pity and pathos the lips, such calmness on that high brow, and such a divine passion for the good glowed in that soul-illumined countenance! And yet art, also, cannot satisfy us. Science gives us the imperfect; art gives us the illusion of the perfect. But there are times, friends, when we demand the real; times of struggle; times of affliction, when the shadow of death is over our hearth; times of some great temptation.

Now how can we feel ourselves near to the Perfect Real? I have said, Religion is the going out of the soul toward the perfect,—*the homesickness of the finite for the Infinite*,—that is religion. In religious acts, therefore, according to my view, in the moral life, do we find the reality of the perfect. The voice that comes from the profounds of being sounds in us. Its dictates give us the assurance of the divine. In obeying its dictates we are rapt out of ourselves, out of our littleness; we are borne over heights of experience of which no conception had ever been ours, and the words of the *Chorus Mysticus* of Faust become true:—

"Das Unzulangliche,
Hier wird's Ereigniss;
Das Undeschreibliche,
Hier ist es gethan."

"Earth's insufficiency
Here grows to Event;
The Indescribable,
Here it is done."

"It is done! In the deed we are lifted above ourselves. In the moral deed we act a universal law, and feel ourselves to be the authors of the law we act; ourselves partakers of the divine nature, ourselves the channels through which the everlasting waters pour their tides, ourselves the *media* through which the everlasting light streams its abundant floods!"

It is not enough, therefore, that we have science and art: we must also have religion. It is not enough that we have teachers of science and teachers of art: we must have teachers of religion also. It is not enough that we have artists of the ideal beautiful: we need, also, artists of the ideal good. And herein is expressed the full meaning of the mission of the teacher of religion: that he shall be *an artist of the ideal good.*

Ah, friends, you say, "Is the world ripe for such ideals and for such idealists?" I know very well that the great majority of men are far down on the ladder of perfection. They are but beginning to spell their moral alphabet. How, then! shall we be utterly disheartened, or shall we go recklessly on, not regarding the realities? But I have said *artists* of the ideal good, and that will help us.

Phidias did not need to leave the mark of his chisel on every stone in all the quarries of Athens. He did but need a few stones for that glorious frieze of the Parthenon that has made his name immortal. Yet these few stones he fashioned into such exquisite shapes, into such types of the perfect form, that they have been the delight of the human race for thousands of years, and from generation to generation have enhanced and refined the idea of beauty, and are still a joy to those whom fate has favored to see them. And this is what we aspire to achieve with respect to the good. Not to change the whole world—we know very well that all souls are not yet ready for the fullness of the message of freedom: but to show, in the case of a few souls, what love is possible, what self-restraint, what self-sacrifice, are possible; to show in small societies the type of a social perfection, which will one day be realized among all mankind when the glad time of fulfillment shall arrive, when the utmost liberty of each shall be joined to the utmost service of the good of all. To found such an Ethical Union is the dream of my life. To found such Ethical Unions the world over, that are to be outposts of righteousness in the dominions of darkness, shall be the life's work of the teachers of our gospel—the gospel of a pure humanity.

The teacher of religion, then, shall be a student of history, an adept in philosophy, a specialist in charity, an artist of the ideal good. And, friends, shall we not make an effort to obtain such men? Shall we not earnestly unite for so great a purpose; shall I appeal in vain to you for help? I ask for help. I have come here at the call of your Directors, to be, as it were, for the time being, a leader in this Free Religious movement. I would not be the leader of dead men. I feel that a living work is to be done, and ask for living help to do it with. Come, then, and let us have done with quibbles and doubts. A great work is open before us. It is right and needful that it should be done. Let us then prove that it can be done, *by doing it.*

To-day is Decoration Day. The May month, which brings light and beauty into the homes of the living, makes green the graves of our dead. We honor them. We deck with flowers the graves of the heroes that fell to give political liberty to America. Yea, they have not fought in vain; their work will live. But their work must be continued by a larger work to-day. We, too, are to be soldiers. We, too, must fight for liberty, but for that spiritual liberty which is more dearly bought, but is of priceless value. In former days a champion of America gave to the people a ringing watchword that has been echoed again and again, and stirred the hearts of thousands. "Liberty and Union," were his words, and liberty and union did they help to achieve. I use the same watchword to-day in our cause and for our spiritual conflict. It is not enough that we have liberty as individuals. The time of individualism has passed. Let us, too, cry for Liberty and Union—Union on the basis of Liberty, now, forever, inseparably one.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL DEPARTMENT.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

J. LL. J.

VI. MUSIC.

1. *Music as an Attraction.*—The danger lies in depending too much on it for this purpose. Many Sunday Schools are in imminent danger of sinking into a singing school. As a consequence other exercises are subordinated. The lesson time is encroached upon, not infrequently crowded out entirely. There is an itching for "something new in the way of music." Singing books are frequently changed, and there is a clamor for flippant, rattling tunes, accompanied, of course, with an indifference as to the quality of the hymn. Schools that are reported as making a "leading feature" of their music, using that as a "drawing" attraction, are to be watched lest they become flippant, sensational and spasmodic in their prosperity.

2. *Music as a means of Religious Culture.*—The danger lies in making far too little of it in this respect, of under-estimating the intellectual quality of a religious hymn. The lessons we put into our songs sink deeper and last longer than those we give as class lessons—

"A verse may find him who a sermon flies."

Strange as it may appear, is there not still greater danger in Sunday Schools of under-estimating the devotional element in singing? The worshipful spirit is conspicuous from its absence in a majority of Sunday School singing books. In so far as they have meaning, it is chopped up into didactic phrases inculcating familiar ethics or stereotyped theology. The music ought to be the truest expression of worship in the Sunday School. A successful realization of this implies—(*a*) rigid selections; sing no words that have not sense and sentiment worth singing. As near as may be, no tune should be sung but what has in it the quality of endurance—tunes that have in them vitality enough to stay by the child. (*b*) A limited number of tunes must suffice so as to secure thorough mastery of words and music, and what is more valuable, the benefit of hallowed associations. Children when left to themselves generally call for the old tune; 'tis cruel to goad them on to the new pieces continually. The intellect is eager for something new, while the heart, even of children, clings to the old and loves the familiar. (*c*) The music in this case must be wisely subordinated to the other exercises. It should never be allowed to encroach upon the lesson, and never should be carried to the point of listlessness. (*d*) The words as well as the tune should be deeply carved into the memory. It is lamentable that our children should become slaves to the printed page so early as to be unable to sing their favorite song "without a book." Let the school be occasionally required to close all the singing books and then try to sing the most familiar hymns. It is well also to sing occasionally without an organ, which ought to be regarded as a faithful ally to, but not a substitute for the human voice. (*e*) New pieces should be acquired, if possible, by practice outside the school hour; failing in this, the new piece can be acquired slowly. Never try more than one new piece on a Sunday; sing that once or twice then let it rest. (*f*) A chorister is to be regarded as essential an adjunct to the Sunday School as to the church, and should be diligently sought until found. But beware lest you find in him only a singing teacher, one who with the sensitiveness of his profession wearies of a tune ere the children have learned to love it, or who is continually interrupting the devotions of the school (for such the singing ought to be considered) with technical corrections and suggestions. It is not the province of the Sunday School to teach musical science; but it is the privilege of the Sunday School to sing together the best things available in the best manner possible, and the chorister will lead them by the most direct route to this end.

3. *Unity Services and Songs for Sunday Schools.*—This little pamphlet, prepared by J. Vila Blake, and published at this office about eight months ago, illustrates so well the preceding points that I call attention to it in order to speak of the experience of one school in its use. The teachers accepted it reluctantly, and the children manifested no enthusiasm; the choral services and the hymns were acquired slowly, sometimes a little grudgingly, as they petitioned a return to the Sunny-Side. But slowly the services have increased in impressiveness, and now at the end of eight months, about 10 out of the 20 tunes are mastered, so that they are sung gladly, heartily. The services are beginning to convey a spirit, as well as a form of devotion. There is now no hesitation to use the book. But it will take six months more to familiarize ourselves with the 20 tunes and six services, then we expect it will be dear to us, and a source of strength and comfort, provided it is not jostled out of the way with a part II. The size as well as the intention of this book necessitates reiteration, the one thing that will make noble music and helpful words dear to children and adults, while it is the same thing which will make shallow music and senseless words tedious and tasteless. Were a tune sung every session in a year, it would give only some 45 repetitions. How few Sunday Schools give the best of tunes even that chance for its life, yet by no rapid process do the *folk-songs* of a people grow.

VII. SPECIAL OCCASIONS.

1. *Picnics and week day Festivities.*—Mr. Gannett, in the annual report of the Western Unitarian Sunday School Society last May, indicated that the reports from the Sunday Schools gave prominence to the picnics and festival occasions which were generally reported very successful, This is as it should be. It is the legitimate province of the Sunday School to make childhood happy. In addition to the annual summer picnic, one or two children's parties given in the church parlors, or in private residences during the year, is the children's due, providing always that they come early, and the refreshments be served in such a way that there be no more danger of dyspepsia than if they staid at home. Music and dancing are fitting, and perhaps the most rational adjunct of such an occasion. For teachers to occasionally entertain their classes at their own homes, or with an excursion to the woods, or to the most interesting manufactory in the town, would be a happy combination of pleasure and duty which would strongly cement the bonds of fellowship. But the chief word to be spoken here is one of caution Picnics, &c., for their own sake as passing occasions of pleasure are admirable, but as recruiting or reviving instrumentalities they are treacherous enemies in disguise. Never allow them to intrude upon the regular exercise. Don't begin to notice them in the school long beforehand. It makes the children feverish. Don't waste strength in elaborate preparation that is needed elsewhere.

2. *Christmas Festivals.*—The need of caution is still greater here. The Christmas tree is getting to be a terror to many Sunday School workers, so exorbitant is the demand. Have one by all means, but try to save it from becoming a selfish indulgence to the children. Make the minimum of the presents and the maximum of the good time. Will we not yet discover how to give to our children at the Christmas festival the joy, greater than that of receiving, the joy of giving. At least the Sunday School tree should be democratic.

3. *Concerts.*—Sunday School concerts, as usually indulged in, are to be suspected for the following reasons: (*a*) They are generally held in the evening, when the little ones ought to be in bed. (*b*) The dramatic aim is uppermost, the little ones parade their accomplishments, develop too early self-consciousness. Success brings too great pride, failure, too great humiliation. (*c*) They intrude upon the regular exercises of the school which are far more valuable. They distract teacher and pupil, and the ordinary exercises seem "flat and unprofitable."

4. *Union Services.*—The special services described on pp. 6 and 7 of Tool-Chest conserve most of what is valuable in the concert and avoid much of what is pernicious. These services give: (*a*) Common ground for old and young, give the congregation an interest in the school, and the school a place in the church. (*b*) Divide the year with pleasant time, marks and gives variety without destroying the unity of the year's work, (*c*) As experience of those who tried them prove they are occasions of peculiar religiousness; the thoughtful worshipful spirit is uppermost.

But the success of these services depend: (*a*) Upon the heartiness of the singing, which ought to be rehearsed largely outside o: school session. (*b*) Upon the intrinsic excellence of the recitations. Let there be no strain after quantity but a growing concern for quality. Two or three selections voluntarily given is better than many forced recitations. Trust this part to the judgment of the teacher. (*c*) The fitness of the decorations trust to the ladies of the parish

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The Women's Liberal Religious Union will hold its first meeting, after vacation, at the Unitarian Headquarters, Room 57, No. 75 E. Madison street, Monday, Sept. 29th, at half-past two P. M. A full attendance of old and new members, as well as others interested in the work, is earnestly desired.

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Whereas, We feel the great need of rallying the Liberal minds of the West around one common centre; therefore,

Resolved, That the Western Unitarian Conference conditions its fellowship on no dogmatic tests, but welcomes all thereto who desire to work with it in advancing the Kingdom of God. (Adopted at Chicago, May 14, 1875.)

WEST. UNIT. SUNDAY-SCHOOL SOCIETY.

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